

Medical Officer's Report for 1921.

GENTLEMEN,

I.—Area.—5000 Acres.

Population (1921).—4,297.

Number of Inhabited Houses.—1,094.

Number of Families or Separate Occupiers.—I, II 5.

Rateable Value.—£19,516.

Sum Represented by a Penny Rate.—£81 9s. 1d.

Number of women dying in or in consequence of child-birth: from Sepsis, 0; other causes, 0.
Deaths of infants under one year of age per 1,000 births: Legitimate, 2; Illegitimate, 0.
Under one week, 1. Age 4 months, 1. Death Rate: 25.64 per 1,000.
Deaths from Measles (all ages), 0. Deaths from Whooping Cough (all ages), 0. Deaths from
Diarrhœa (under 2 years of age), 0.

| Disease. | Total Cases notified. | Cases admitted to Hospital. | Total Deaths. |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------|
| Diphtheria | 21 | 13 | |
| Scarlet Fever | 1 | | |
| Enteric Fever (including Paratyphoid) .. | — | | |
| Puerperal Fever | — | | |
| Pneumonia | — | | |
| Other Diseases generally notifiable:— | | | |
| Erysipelas | 2 | | |
| Other Diseases notifiable locally | — | | |
| Tuberculosis:— | | | |
| (a) Pulmonary { M. | 2 | | |
| { F. | 0 | | |
| { Total | 2 | | |
| (b) Non-pulmonary { M. | 0 | | |
| { F. | 0 | | |
| { Total | 0 | | |

IV.—Causes of Sickness.—During the earlier part of the year many scattered cases of Diphtheria occurred, all traceable to the original epidemic occurring in 1920.

There was a minor epidemic of influenza of a mild type during January and February, otherwise the borough was free from epidemic trouble.

V.—Nursing.—There is a private NURSING ASSOCIATION in the town, which is affiliated to the Somerset County Nursing Association. There is also a MATERNITY AND CHILD WELFARE CENTRE, at which two fully trained nurses are present once a fortnight, and a qualified medical practitioner once a month. This continues to do very good work.

There is a TUBERCULOSIS DISPENSARY situated in the Borough which continues to do excellent work, aided by the co-operation of the medical men in the district. There is also a Tuberculosis Care Committee, which very successfully looks after the patients who no longer attend at the Dispensary, and those who have left any of the Sanatoria. In the same building there is a department for the treatment of Venereal Disease. An ambulance is available in the town for the use of acute cases arising from accident or disease.

VI.—Diphtheria Antitoxin is kept by the Medical Officer of Health for supply to doctors in the district.

VIII.—HOUSING.

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| Number of new houses erected during the year:— | |
| (a) Total | 10 |
| (b) As part of a municipal housing scheme | 8 |
| I. UNFIT DWELLING HOUSES: | |
| Inspection—(1) Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts) | 124 |
| (2) Number of dwelling-houses which were inspected and recorded under the Housing (Inspection of District) Regulations, 1910 | 112 |
| (3) Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation | 6 |
| (4) Number of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-heading) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation | 29 |
| 2. REMEDY OF DEFECTS WITHOUT SERVICE OF FORMAL NOTICES. | |
| Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their Officers | 2 |
| 3. ACTION UNDER STATUTORY POWERS. | |
| A.—Proceedings under section 28 of the Housing, Town Planning, &c. Act, 1919. | |
| (1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs | 6 |
| (2) Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit:— .. | 5 |
| (a) by owners | — |
| (b) by Local Authority in default of owners | — |
| (3) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders became operative in pursuance of declarations by owners of intention to close | — |
| B.—Proceedings under Public Health Acts. | |
| (1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied | 12 |
| (2) Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied:— | |
| (a) by owners | 12 |
| (b) by Local Authority in default of owners | — |
| C.—Proceedings under sections 17 and 18 of the Housing, Town Planning, &c. Act, 1909. | |
| (1) Number of representations made with a view to the making of Closing Orders | — |
| (2) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders were made | — |
| (3) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the dwelling-houses having been rendered fit | — |
| (4) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made | — |
| (5) Number of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders | — |
| Number of Houses erected under Government Scheme | 8 |
| Number of Houses in course of erection.. .. . | 34 |
| Erected by Private enterprise | 2 |

(Merrick, Waller)

Cost per house.—A.—Parlour Type. B.—Non-Parlour Type.:

Figures not yet available. Cost has to be adjusted according to scale on completion.

At the end of 1921 eight only of the New Houses were in occupation. Since that date ten more are occupied, and the whole of the 42 will be ready for occupation by or before Midsummer next. Up to the present these new erections do not appear to have met the want of more houses among the poorer labourer and artisan classes, and many buildings which are not reasonably fit for occupation are still in use as Dwellings in consequence of there being no other houses available.

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| A. Prior to the War, i.e., in 1914 and preceding years some 15 houses were erected annually by private enterprise. Since 1914 only about one house per annum has been erected, hence there is under this heading a shortage of at least .. | 98 |
| B. There are some 28 houses in the Borough in occupation which are unfit and cannot be made fit, but from which the occupiers cannot be ejected until other houses are available | 28 |
| C. Other houses which, although they cannot at present be regarded as unfit for human habitation, fall definitely below a reasonable standard.. .. . | 35 |
| | — |
| Total .. | 161 |

The original Housing Scheme was for 142 houses, but the Ministry of Health has for the present cut the same down to 42. The Housing Committee have received at least 70 applications for these 42 houses.

VII.—Sanitary Administration.—There has been no change since last year.

I am, Your Obedient Servant,

F. J. ALDRIDGE, Medical Officer of Health.